

December 3, 2018

***DHS Awarded Strategic Support from
the Annie E. Casey Foundation***

(Des Moines, Iowa) – The Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS) is pleased to announce it has been awarded strategic support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation (AECF) related to the implementation of the Family First Prevention and Services Act (Family First). This federal legislation will restructure how the federal government spends money on child welfare to improve outcomes for children. It will prevent the need for removal through evidence-based family preservation services.

Key components of Family First will include foster care prevention services such as mental health and substance abuse treatment services, in-home and parent skill-based programs that include parent education, and individual and family counseling. It will also include kinship navigator programs, which are designed to provide support to relatives and fictive kin when the child cannot be safely maintained in the home.

Over the coming year, AECF is committed to providing on-the-ground and intensive consulting services to DHS to support our efforts to implement Family First. Specifically, AECF will provide assistance in assessing current practice, policies and contracting, and will provide recommendations on how to prioritize focused strategic improvements. AECF will use robust data analysis to understand the needs of families served by DHS and how to align foster care prevention services to meet those needs.

Additionally, AECF will support DHS in developing financial strategies and prevention model selection that will support DHS' commitments to providing high-quality, effective and efficient services to children and families.

The mission of AECF is to foster public policies, human service reforms, and community supports that more effectively meet the needs of today's vulnerable children and families. AECF provides strategic consulting on child welfare issues to facilitate significant, measurable, and enduring human system transformation to improve the lives of children and families.

To learn more visit dhs.iowa.gov/child-welfare/FamilyFirst.

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